

The Graduate School

Graduate Students Fare Well in National Security Innovation Competition

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Andrew Blaich and Qi Liao, graduate students in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Notre Dame, took second place in the third annual National Security Innovation Competition (NSIC) held May 1 in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Their innovation, Enterprise Network Activities Visualization (ENAVis), streamlines the way in which network administrators can view a complicated network. Using ENAVis, administrators can gain greater insights

about the connectivity between hosts, users and applications that is often lost in multi-user systems deployed in an enterprise network. Thus, they can better manage and track user identity to determine “who” is doing “what” on the network. This is particularly important as the U.S. continues to focus on implementing strategies and security measures to protect the nation from terrorist attacks or threats.

Sponsored by the Colorado Homeland Defense Alliance, Colorado Springs Technology Incubator and National Homeland Defense Foundation, the contest was open to full-time students at U.S. universities. The competition stimulates interest by college students in national security-related innovations and exposes novel technologies to a broad audience including industry, academic and government organizations involved in aerospace, defense, security and first-responder activities.

The 2009 competitors featured some of the nation’s top schools, including Air Force Institute of Technology, Arizona State University (first-place winners), Colorado School of Mines (third-place recipients), Colorado State University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Michigan Technological University, Pennsylvania State University, Rice University, University of Arizona, University of Buffalo, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, University of Denver, University of Washington, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Washington State University.

Participating teams developed an original idea, submitted a written paper describing the

innovation and presented an oral overview of their project to a group of judges, end users and potential funding sources. The 2009 panel of judges included security and defense experts from the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Northern Command, Raytheon and Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Each submission was judged on its technical capabilities: Is the innovation truly unique and appropriate to an existing or emerging security problem? Market and industry analyses were part of the mix: Do the participants demonstrate an awareness of market need, as well as an understanding of major trends or other forces that affect the security industry? Participants also were judged on the development of a reasonable action plan and their presentation skills.

All teams also were required to have faculty advisors. Advisors to the Notre Dame team were Aaron Striegel and Douglas Thain, associate and assistant professors, respectively, in Notre Dame's [Department of Computer Science and Engineering](http://cse.nd.edu/) [\[link:http://cse.nd.edu/\]](http://cse.nd.edu/).

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Courtesy of Nina Welding and [ND Newswire](http://newsinfo.nd.edu/news/11741-graduate-students-fare-well-in-national-security-innovation-competition/) [\[link:http://newsinfo.nd.edu/news/11741-graduate-students-fare-well-in-national-security-innovation-competition/\]](http://newsinfo.nd.edu/news/11741-graduate-students-fare-well-in-national-security-innovation-competition/)

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